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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2016

TAGS: ETRD PREL WTRO UP

SUBJECT: UKRAINE: AMBASSADOR URGES RAPID WTO ACCESSION

REF: A. STATE 180216

1B. KYIV 4187

Classified By: AMBASSADOR, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) Ambassador delivered ref A points urging rapid WTO accession to Mykola Azarov, First Deputy Prime Minister, in the context of a broad ranging meeting on November 3. Ambassador emphasized that Washington would be watching the status of Ukraine's accession very closely and would consider it an important indicator of the new government's direction. Azarov acknowledged the significance of the issue but offered no substantive comment.

12. (C) Ambassador also pressed for swift progress on WTO accession during a November 2 lunch with Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych (ref B). Yanukovych promised forward movement on accession, but cautioned that his government did not want to force legislation through Parliament but would proceed on "our own schedule."

13. (C) In addition, Ambassador highlighted ref A points regarding importance of WTO accession as a signal of Ukraine's foreign policy orientation to Rada Speaker Moroz on November 7. Moroz said that the plan is to have all legislation passed by early December to allow for Ukraine's accession as soon as possible. However, he qualified his comments, as he has in the past, that as the Rada passes this legislation it must ensure that it protects Ukraine's national interests and raised agricultural subsidies as a possible stumbling block.

Taylor